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THE WAR WORK OF THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES

By JOHN R. MOTT,

General Secretary, National War Work Council, Young Men's Christian Associations of the United States.

When America entered the war, there was created the National War Work Council of Young Men's Christian Associations. It was designed to unite the national, state and local organizations of this movement in order to prevent undesirable duplication of effort and in order to make possible the most efficient service of the men in the American Army and Navy. Its work was given an official status by the following executive order:

WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON.

May 9, 1917.

GENERAL ORDERS, No. 57.

II.—The following Order by the President, issued April 26, 1917, is published to the Army for the information and guidance of all concerned:

The Young Men's Christian Association has, in the present emergency, as under similar circumstances in the past, tendered its services for the benefit of enlisted men in both arms of the service. This organization is prepared by experience, approved methods, and assured resources to serve especially the troops in camp and field. It seems best for the interest of the service that it shall continue as a voluntary civilian organization; however, the results obtained are so beneficial and bear such a direct relation to efficiency, inasmuch as the Association provision contributes to the happiness, content, and morale of the personnel, that in order to unify the civilian betterment activities in the Army and further the work of the organization that has demonstrated its ability to render a service desired by both officers and men, official recognition is hereby given the Young Men's Christian Association as a valuable adjunct and asset to the service. Officers are enjoined to render the fullest practicable assistance and co-operation in the maintenance and extension of the Association, both at permanent posts and stations, and in camp and field. To this end attention of officers is called to the precedent and policy already established in

(1) An Act, approved May 31, 1902, giving authority to the Secretary of War to grant permission by revocable license for the erection and maintenance of Association buildings on military reservations for the promotion of the social, physical, intellectual, and moral welfare of enlisted men.

(2) An Act of Congress making appropriation for the Army for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1911, and referred to in General Orders, No. 54, War De-

partment, 1910, wherein the furnishing of heat and light for the above-mentioned buildings was authorized.

(3) General Orders, No. 39, War Department, 1914 (paragraph 80, Compilation of Orders, 1881-1915), wherein commanding officers were enjoined (a) to provide all proper facilities practicable to aid the Association; (b) to assign suitable sites; (c) to supply transportation for Association tentage and equipment; (d) to care for and police Association tents and grounds; (e) to accord accredited secretaries the privilege of the purchase of supplies from the Quartermaster's Department; (f) to furnish, where practicable, tentage and shelter.

(2586501 A-A. G. O.)

By order of the Secretary of War,

H. L. SCOTT,
Major-General, Chief of Staff.

Official:

H. P. McCAIN, *the Adjutant-General.*

In addition, the following general orders were issued by the Navy Department:

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON.

July 26, 1917.

GENERAL ORDERS, No. 313.

1. The Young Men's Christian Association, in addition to its large service to enlisted men during times of peace, has greatly increased its facilities and efforts during the present need represented by the increased forces in the Navy and Marine Corps, and the calling of the Naval Reserve and Naval Militia. This organization is prepared by experience, approved methods, and assured resources to serve our enlisted men. The results obtained by this voluntary civilian organization are so beneficial and bear such a direct relationship to efficiency, inasmuch as the Association provision contributes to the happiness, content and morale of the personnel, that in order to unify the civilian betterment activities in the Navy and further the work of the organization that has demonstrated its ability to render a service desired by both officers and men, cordial recognition is hereby given the Young Men's Christian Association as a valuable adjunct and asset to the service.

2. Officers are urged to render the fullest practicable assistance and co-operation in the maintenance and extension of the Association at the regular Navy yards and stations, and at such other stations as may be established on either a temporary or permanent basis. To this end it is desired that officers, ashore and afloat, extend all possible consideration to accredited representatives of the Association. This should include:

(1) Authorization by commandants for the erection of buildings at the various Navy yards and stations in accordance with instructions already issued, and the provision of heat and light for said buildings.

(2) Co-operation in facilitating accredited representatives in their access to Navy yards and stations and to ships and temporary camps.

(3) The granting of commissary privileges where practicable.

(4) Furnishing where practicable tentage for shelter when in temporary camps.

(5) Transportation on naval craft, when necessary, of secretaries and supplies.

The National War Work Council is composed of nearly two hundred leading citizens representing virtually every state of the Union and meets approximately every three or four months. The Executive Committee, composed of between twenty and thirty members, holds fortnightly meetings. The Council has its headquarters at 347 Madison Avenue, New York City. Its work is conducted through the following bureaus: Finance, Personnel, Materiel, Transportation, Religious Work, Educational Work, Physical Work, Entertainment, Purchasing. In addition to these bureaus, which center at the New York headquarters, there is a regional organization in each of the six military departments, with headquarters at Boston, New York, Atlanta, Chicago, San Antonio, and San Francisco.

The War Work Council is conducting work at present at nearly one thousand centers in the United States and in the various American possessions. The work is carried on almost entirely in buildings erected for Association purposes and is under the leadership of a staff of over three thousand secretaries, including those at the national and various regional headquarters. The program of work includes the various physical, social, educational and religious activities. The work is on a broad basis, the facilities and privileges being open alike to officers and men of all arms of the service, regardless of religious affiliation. Satisfactory coöperative relations exist between the Young Men's Christian Association and the other agencies which are seeking to serve the enlisted men, namely, the Government Chaplains, the Knights of Columbus and the Jewish Welfare Board within the camps, and the Young Women's Christian Association, the War Camp Community Service of the Recreation and Playground Association, and the various denominational and other organizations at work outside the camps. The Association as well as these various organizations both within and outside the camps are coördinated and helped by the Commission on Training Camp Activities of the War Department.

Besides the work in the camps and cantonments and at various regular and special army and navy stations at home, the Association seeks to serve the enlisted men while travelling on the var-

ious troop trains and also on the ocean transports. The work of the Young Men's Christian Association on behalf of the American army and navy overseas will soon become the most extensive part of its activity. Already it is conducting work in over seven hundred Association buildings, hotels, cafés and canteens in France, as well as in scores of others in the British Isles and in Italy. The staff of Association workers in connection with the American Expeditionary Forces numbers nearly three thousand men and women. General Pershing has asked the Association to conduct the post exchange, and women workers are used especially in connection with this phase of the work.

Before America entered the war, the International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations had developed a large work on behalf of the soldiers of Allied armies and of prisoners of war. This has continued to expand. The most extensive part of it is that on behalf of the French army, where the work is conducted under the name *Foyer du Soldat*. Over five hundred buildings have been established or equipped for this service and a staff of many hundreds of American and French workers are in charge. The plan is to enlarge this most helpful ministry until, at some two thousand points, its helpful influence will cover the entire French army. The work is carried on with the full and hearty approval of the French War Ministry, and leading French military authorities have borne testimony as to its great value in maintaining the morale and promoting the comfort of the soldiers. A similar work is being furthered by the American Associations throughout the Italian army, where these activities are conducted under the name *Casa del Soldato*. The American Associations are likewise coöperating in introducing such work in the Belgian and Portuguese armies in France as well as among the Chinese and other labor battalions. Its activities are widespread among the armies in Egypt, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Macedonia and East Africa. One of the largest and most valuable parts of the work is that in Russia.

A most significant and beneficent phase of the war work of the American Young Men's Christian Associations has been that which they have conducted from almost the beginning of the war among the prisoners of war in all of the belligerent countries. It is estimated that there are now between five and six million prisoners. The American Associations minister directly or indirectly to nearly

all of them. Their work has been introduced into the countries one by one until now this practical service is being rendered in every country having military prisoners. The Association does not conduct relief work among the American prisoners, as that is the distinctive service of the American Red Cross, but it does continue to place at their disposal all of its facilities in the way of recreational sports, educational, social and religious work. Among the prisoners of other nationalities the Association is still called upon to do a large amount of relief work as well as to conduct its regular program of activities.

The Young Men's Christian Association is conducting its war work at present on an annual budget of approximately fifty million dollars, but in view of the many new demands and the inevitably enlarged plans for its work, it will require for the coming year considerably more than one hundred million dollars.

WAR WORK OF YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

BY A. ESTELLE PADDOCK,

Publicity Director, War Work Council, Young Women's Christian Association.

A million and a half men were in the American Army a year after this country entered the war. A million and a half women at the same time were employed on war orders in factories. A million other women were being speeded up in industries affected by the war. As the size of the army increases, the number of women in industry increases at the same rate. Each man who is withdrawn from factory work must be replaced by a woman. This vast industrial army of women forms the second line of defense.

This sudden influx brings about a shifting and changing of the women already wage-earners. They as well as the newcomers find themselves in strange environments. Ten million women in this country are now facing the wage-earners' problems.

The Young Women's Christian Association feels strongly its responsibility toward all women affected by the war. Its fifty years' experience in housing, feeding and recreation is brought to bear upon the situation. The War Work Council, now numbering